

Chief, Planning and Review Staff, ORR

9 February 1959

Chief, Industrial Division, ORR

Comments on CIA Career Staff

REF : Memorandum to the Deputy Directors from the Inspector General,
"IG Survey of the Office of Personnel", dated 29 January 1959

1. Before answering the questions presented in the referenced memorandum, I would like to distinguish between the CIA Career Staff which we now have and some other type that may be far more beneficial to the individual and the Agency. Although the current regulation, CIA Regulation R 20-105 (6 December 1955), defines THE CAREER STAFF in paragraph 2a. as "a group of carefully selected and trained individuals who accept an obligation to devote themselves to the needs of the Agency, and who intend to make a career with the Agency," the standards which have been applied in practice in selecting the members of this staff have not been very discriminating. Any one who has spent the required time in the Agency and is willing to sign the application can become a member. On the one hand, a supervisor almost has to testify and prove that an employee is not suited for continued employment before an employee's application is denied. On the other hand, an employee, who in good conscience feels he cannot make a firm commitment, is almost forced to sign the application if he wishes to enjoy the usual benefits of employment with the Agency. In practice, therefore, the current career staff does not include only those employees who are "carefully trained and selected", nor does it include only those who "accept an obligation to devote themselves to the needs of the Agency." Application and acceptance for the current Career Service Staff has become a meaningless and perfunctory procedure.

2. And now I turn to the specific questions of the reference memorandum. I think that there are some merits to a CIA Career Staff which has the following characteristics:

- a. Clear and recognizable benefits or preferences for the member.
- b. Clearly defined commitments and meaningful benefits to the Agency.

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SUBJECT: Comments on CIA Career Staff

- c. A highly restricted membership, an elite corps if you like, where selection is based on demonstrated or even outstanding performance. Perhaps restricted to one-half or one-third of the employees the components covered by a career service.
- d. Selection based on the question, "What has the applicant done to deserve membership?" rather than, "What is there in the individual's record that clearly demonstrates that he should not be a member?"

3. Only occasionally has the information on the career preference outline been of use in making judgements as to promotions, rotations and assignments. Usually they are so stereotyped that they include what the employee thinks his supervisors or the career service board wish to see. I know of no case where an employee's career preference outline has accomplished anything which could not have been accomplished more effectively in other ways.

4. Greater interchange of employees on a rotation basis between DD/P, DD/I and DD/S is certainly desirable. Experience which can be gained in this manner would give the employee better perspective and increase the cooperation among the major components of the Agency. Little benefit and much danger ~~are~~ implied in a rotation system which does not clearly and firmly plan and commit the Agency to assigning the employee to a specific, suitable, and desirable position after the tour outside his career service has been completed.

5. It is clear that the size, method of selection, benefits, and commitments of the Career Staff as currently constituted prevent it from developing into a useful personnel management tool for either the Agency or the employee.



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